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ABSTRACT

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) recommends a nine-item agenda for reform of the preparation of educational administrators. The agenda addresses reform issues in the areas of people, programs, and assessment. In addition to describing the agenda, this document: (1) depicts the problems to which the agenda is addressed; (2) explicates the meaning of each agenda item; and (3) raises some of the issues that need to be confronted in planning for implementation of the recommendations. Appended is a description of the NPBEA and an order form for additional copies of this publication. (3 references) (SI)

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A Report of the National Policy Board for Educational Administration

Improving the Preparation of School Administrators

An Agenda for Reform

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration

Headquartered at

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Charlottesville, VA 22903

May 1989

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The Purpose of This Report

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration recommends a nine item agenda for reform in the preparation of educational administrators. In addition to describing the agenda, this document (1) depicts the problems to which the agenda is addressed, (2) explicates the meaning of each agenda item, and (3) raises some of the issues that need to be confronted in planning for implementation of the recommendations. Our effort has been to produce a report that can be used to convey the reform goals to the public, lay out objectives to guide improvement efforts at the state and local levels, and stimulate discussion of implementation strategies and tactics appropriate to the agenda.

National Policy Board
for Educational Administration
May, 1989

Executive Summary: An Agenda For Reform

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration is committed to the improvement of educational leadership. This report specifies a nine-item agenda for improving the preparation of administrators who will lead our nation's elementary and secondary schools and school districts. These nine items are grouped into three categories of necessary change addressing **people, programs,** and **assessment.**

People

The National Policy Board advocates the improvement of preparation programs by modifying the quality, diversity, and numbers of people involved in those programs and specifically recommends that:

1. **Vigorous recruitment strategies be mounted to attract**
   - **The brightest and most capable candidates, of diverse race, ethnicity, and sex, and**
   - **A minority enrollment at least comparable to the region's minority public school enrollment.**
2. **Entrance standards to administrator preparation programs be dramatically raised to ensure that all candidates possess strong analytic ability, high administrative potential, and demonstrated success in teaching[1] including**
   - **Assessment of analytic ability and administrative aptitude by a standardized national test, with admission to preparation programs limited to individuals scoring in the top quartile, and**
   - **Assessment of teaching excellence by state licensure, a master's degree in teaching, and evidence of successful teaching in a classroom setting.**
3. **The quality of faculty in administrator preparation programs be ensured by**
   - **Strengthening faculty recruitment, selection, and staff development programs,**
   - **Maintaining a critical mass of at least five full-time faculty members,**
   - **Providing the bulk of teaching, advising, and mentoring through full-time faculty who have demonstrated success in teaching, clinical activities, and knowledge production in the field, and**
   - **Ensuring a student-faculty ratio comparable to other graduate professional degree programs on campus.**

[1] *The teaching requirement should be considered optional in the case of the position of chief school business administrator.*

Programs

The National Policy Board advocates strengthening the structure, duration, and content of the pre-service preparation of educational administrators and specifically recommends that:

4. **The doctorate in educational administration (Ed.D.) be a prerequisite to national certification and state licensure for full-time administrators who are in charge of a school or school system,[2] and**
   - **Sixth year or specialist degree programs in educational administration be abolished for this level of position,**
   - **Programs in educational administration terminating in a master's degree be abolished altogether.**
5. **One full-time year of academic residency and one full-time year of field residency be included in the Ed.D. preparation program. Modifications in the type or duration of the clinical residency are permitted for candidates with full-time administrative experience in education. Additional appropriate program requirements are to be determined by the faculty of the graduate school or graduate division in education at each institution.**
6. **The elements of the curriculum be developed to transmit a common core of knowledge and skills, grounded in the problems of practice, including**
   - **Societal and cultural influences on schooling,**
   - **Teaching and learning processes and school improvement,**
   - **Organizational theory,**
   - **Methodologies of organizational studies and policy analysis,**
   - **Leadership and management processes and functions,**
   - **Policy studies and politics of education,**
   - **Moral and ethical dimensions of schooling.**
7. **Long term, formal relationships be established between universities and school districts to create partnership sites for clinical study, field residency, and applied research.**

[2]Although a chief school business administrator may be prepared in a doctoral program in educational administration, alternative routes to this specialization are appropriate including, for example, an M.B.A., a sub-doctoral program in education, or a joint education-business program.

Assessment

The National Policy Board advocates the development and implementation of quality assurance mechanisms and specifically recommends that:

8. **A national professional standards board consisting primarily of practicing school administrators be established to develop and administer a national certification examination and that states be encouraged to require candidates for licensure to pass this examination.**

9. **National accreditation of administrator preparation programs be withheld unless the programs meet the standards specified in this report and that criteria for state accreditation and program approval include these standards.**

The Current State of Preparation Programs for Educational Administrators

Every educational reform report of the past decade has concluded that the nation cannot have excellent schools without effective leaders. Researchers studying school improvement have stressed the link between effective administrators and a positive school climate. In the marketplace the nation accepts the importance of effective leadership as axiomatic: companies with ineffective leaders end up in takeover battles or bankruptcy court.

Nonetheless, the nation devotes relatively meager resources to producing effective leaders for schools. In the past few years our society has taken steps to upgrade the teaching profession and improve student achievement standards, but we have neglected the equally important task of enhancing the preparation of school administrators. For those individuals who will manage our top corporations, tend to our health, and provide us legal counsel, we spare no expense in creating appropriate learning environments, providing financial aid, and attracting top-drawer faculty. Any suggestion that the nation could produce skilled professionals in these fields without excellent preparation programs would be thought foolish. Yet that is how we try to produce educational administrators.

Over the past quarter century pre-service preparation programs for educational administration have proliferated, but their quality has deteriorated. In a variety of ways, these programs are failing their candidates; ultimately, they are failing our nation's schoolchildren. They have strayed far from the classical model of intensive, disciplined study under the tutelage of scholars and practitioners. Instead they enroll large numbers of almost entirely part-time students who accrue credits on a piecemeal basis toward inadequate standards of licensure. The model that the field accepts for certification and licensure is recognizable more by its weaknesses than by its strengths, weaknesses so pervasive they are treated as inevitable characteristics of the field.

Some substantial criticism for this state of affairs must be leveled at the programs themselves. An ordinary administrator preparation program in education has most or all of the following characteristics.

People

Recruitment The typical graduate administrator preparation program does not have a recruitment strategy. Financial support for graduate educational administration students ranks low among university funding priorities. Even in graduate schools with national reputations, the pool of potential applicants for admission to educational administration programs is geographically limited. Almost all of the educational administration applicants for admission live and work within commuting distance of the campus. And in spite of the desperate need for minority group administrators, recruitment programs for minority students are ordinarily informal and unsuccessful.

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Selection Programs are aggressively non-selective. Among ninety-four intended majors of graduate students in 1985-86, the average GRE scores of educational administration students ranked fourth from the bottom—ninety-first (Griffiths, Stout, & Forsyth, 1988, p. 290). Many graduate programs adhere to an unspoken pact that any teacher, even an unsuccessful teacher with marginal academic ability, has an inalienable right to study for an administrator's certificate, and persistent candidates are almost always admitted. The end result is a glut of certificate holders with dubious qualifications who cannot find school administrative jobs. As of 1986, the oversupply of certificate holders per state was 5,758 (Bliss, 1988, p. 198).

Faculty According to a 1988 survey, professors of educational administration spend only twelve percent of their time on research—probably an exaggeration, since this was a self-reporting survey (McCarthy, Kuh, Newell, & Iacona, 1988, p. 57). At the same time, practicing administrators complain that professors of educational administration are divorced from field practice. How, then, do faculty spend their time? The answer is in processing hordes of students who generate fiscally-appealing credit hours through certification courses. McCarthy, et al. (1988, p. 20) noted that the modal number of graduate faculty in departments of educational administration is 2.0. Over half the doctoral degree-granting institutions have five or fewer faculty (p. 21). Dissertation loads of 35 to 40 students are common. And in a field that needs integration between coursework and practice, the use of clinical professors and outstanding practitioners as key program faculty is infrequent.

Programs

Concentrated Period of Study Most graduate students in educational administration, including those in doctoral programs, are part-time students and full-time employees. Residency requirements, where they exist at all, are generally technical fabrications, (e.g., accumulating 18 to 24 credits in a calendar year), that simply exacerbate the problem of the part-time student by crowding more courses into a shorter span of time. In many programs clinical experiences and field residency requirements are arranged to fit a student's full-time work schedule or are missing altogether.

Degree Level and Intensity The type of professional education required for licensure in educational administration varies from state to state. Many states certify people at or below the master's degree level. In most states, certification can be obtained by completing a patchwork of courses in a variety of institutions, often under inferior academic conditions. This contrasts unfavorably with the level and intensity of the professional training required in business administration, law, or public administration. In each of these instances, two to three years of full time study is routinely expected; work undertaken casually at multiple institutions would be quite unacceptable.

Content of the Curriculum The fact that students can get by with haphazard course-taking demonstrates the lack of cohesion and rigor in most educational administration programs. Generally the required core consists only of those courses necessary for licensure in the home state, and any concept of sequence is lost. Course content is often irrelevant, outdated, and unchallenging. Essential learnings, such as knowledge of the teaching and learning process, may not be covered at all. Students routinely complete certification requirements with minimal information about the classroom, the school as an organization, or the social context of schooling.

Professional Socialization Most students complete their training without having formed a professional relationship with a professor or a student colleague. Few can point to work with a professor on a field-based study or article or with other graduate students on a team project. Looking back on their programs, doctoral students are likely to cite a loosely-formed comprehensive examination study group as their most intense collegial relationship.

Clinical Experiences and Field Residency Some programs provide no opportunities for students to practice their skills through clinical experiences or field residency. Those that do seldom integrate such experiences with the regular coursework of the department. Internships or residencies are ordinarily arranged in the student's home school district and often consist of an hour or two a day on top of the student's regular teaching load.

Assessment

Standards of Performance Faculties and deans in schools of education are frequently embarrassed by the academic performance of educational administration graduate students. The modal grade is an "A" – not because all students can demonstrate attainment of a set of criterion-referenced performance standards, but because faculty have given up on holding tired, end-of-the-day students to typical graduate performance. Doctoral dissertations are often methodologically inadequate and banal and are viewed by students as a hurdle never again to be confronted.

Quality Control Despite the efforts of a national accrediting agency and state education agencies to regulate preparation programs, the number of training sites for educational administrators has proliferated to the point that one might question whether the profession is exerting any reasonable control over the quality of entrants into the field. Over 500 institutions of higher education now offer graduate courses in school administration (Griffiths, et al., 1988, p. 20). The lucrative features of certification courses – high enrollments, low cost – have induced colleges and universities to offer random pieces of programs without adequate facilities or faculty. Institutions with no other commitment to training in the education profession offer continuing education courses in educational administration. Low admission standards, coupled with weak instructional programs, make it nearly impossible for state licensing agencies to do anything other than count course hours in certifying school administrators.

Conclusion

We have described the current state of administrator preparation as realistically as possible. Our intent is not to be harsh or unfair, but to be honest about our shortcomings. What we have found is a field frozen through years of accommodation. To thaw this field will require changes proportional to the problems. The problems are systemic, so the reform agenda must be comprehensive.

We propose such an agenda. Though ambitious, the agenda is based upon well-accepted models of professional study. If the changes appear to be great, that only reflects the distance educational administration has strayed from its own roots and from the classical model of professional preparation that is a matter of course in other professional fields. By following this model we envision that administrator preparation programs will attract talented candidates, earn greater public respect, respond to recognized needs to improve the profession, and join with educational administration practitioners in efforts to increase the effectiveness of schools.

America's schools need leaders who are bright, competent, humane, sensitive, public-spirited and ethical. They need administrators who not only possess a vision of excellence but can work with education professionals and staff to refine and implement this vision. Schools are struggling to meet the challenge of increasing student achievement, expanding teacher autonomy and responsibility, and involving students, teachers, and parents in school improvement. Administrators must be prepared to work in diverse and creative ways with all their constituencies under novel and often trying circumstances. Below is our point by point explanation of the changes institutions must make in relation to people, programs, and assessment.

The Agenda for Reform of Preparation Programs for Educational Leaders

People

1. **The National Policy Board recommends that vigorous recruitment strategies be mounted to attract**
   - **The brightest and most capable candidates, of diverse race, ethnicity, and sex, and**
   - **A minority enrollment at least comparable to the region's minority public school enrollment.**

The single best way to prepare top-notch educational leaders is to start with a pool of candidates who are intellectually superior and personally capable. No matter how good the preparation, the result will be limited without a strong base of initial talent.

Rigorous selection standards make no sense if the pool of applicants is uniformly unimpressive. To ensure a diverse pool of strong applicants from which to select, all preparation programs must initiate vigorous recruitment efforts to attract the best candidates from diverse backgrounds.

We believe there is an untapped pool of talented people, representing all races and both sexes, who would be excited and challenged by a career in educational administration but who are not now applying. Some may be unaware of the leadership opportunities that schools offer; others may be drawn to professions that they believe pay more. For some it may be an issue of professional prestige, for others an issue of financial aid. Good recruitment programs will address all of these problems.

Recruitment efforts must reach teachers and other school professionals; undergraduates in colleges and universities; and professionals who may wish to switch careers. They must reach beyond the immediate geographic area. They must include a reassessment of the level of student financial support. They should convey the uniqueness of the program. They must recognize that the best advertisement is a quality program.

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A vigorous recruitment program must include special procedures for confronting the underrepresentation of Black and Hispanic students in graduate training programs in educational administration. The recruitment program should examine how student aid policies may have a particularly inhibiting effect on minority students. The purpose of these efforts will be to achieve a minority enrollment in administrator preparation that will at least reflect the region's minority public school enrollment.

We will not fare worse with good recruitment and strong programs than we do now with haphazard recruitment and inadequate programs. We believe that as institutions implement our total agenda for reforming administrator preparation, the quality and reputation of these programs will improve; and as the quality goes up, so will the pool of applicants grow.

2. **The National Policy Board recommends that entrance standards to administrator preparation programs be dramatically raised to ensure that all candidates possess strong analytic ability, high administrative potential, and demonstrated success in teaching[3] including**
   - **Assessment of analytic ability and administrative aptitude by a standardized national test, with admission to preparation programs limited to individuals scoring in the top quartile, and**
   - **Assessment of teaching excellence by state licensure, a master's degree in teaching, and evidence of successful teaching in a classroom setting.**

Administrator preparation programs must deal forcefully with the problems of low-quality applicants and lax selection by dramatically raising entrance standards. Only those individuals with strong analytic ability and demonstrated excellence in teaching should be admitted to administrator preparation.

Toward this end, we propose that a standardized national examination be developed for prospective educational administrators, similar to those required for admission to other professional programs (MCAT, GMAT, or LSAT). The examination will evaluate candidates' verbal, mathematical and reasoning abilities, as well as other skills indicative of administrative potential. Only those candidates who score well above average — the top quartile is a reasonable cutoff — will be eligible for admission.

There are compelling reasons for considering excellence in teaching as a selection criterion for prospective administrators. The teaching and learning process is the core function of the school. This is the process that makes education a unique administrative challenge. Given a choice, teachers always choose outstanding peers as their leaders in facilitating instruction; leaders who are in touch with them and their work; leaders who know that the school is a learning place. Evidence of teaching

[3]The teaching requirement is optional in the case of the position of chief school business administrator.

excellence will be the possession of state licensure and a master's degree in teaching. With all the reform reports in teacher education advocating a subject matter major for teachers and a fifth year of training in teaching at or soon after employment as a teacher, it seems inappropriate that school leaders should have less preparation in instruction. Additionally, evidence of successful teaching in a school setting should be obtained by observing and interviewing candidates in local sites and through interviews and recommendations by supervisors and colleagues.

3. The National Policy Board recommends that the quality of faculty in administrator preparation programs be ensured by

- **Strengthening faculty recruitment, selection, and staff development programs,**
- **Maintaining a critical mass of at least five full-time faculty members,**
- **Providing the bulk of teaching, advising, and mentoring through full-time faculty who have demonstrated success in teaching, clinical activities, and knowledge production in the field, and**
- **Ensuring a student-faculty ratio comparable to other graduate professional degree programs on campus.**

A department of educational administration can be no better than its faculty. The changes we propose in the duration, intensity, and content of programs can be accomplished only with a high-quality, fully-staffed faculty in place.

First, the Board urges higher education institutions involved in administrator preparation to take immediate steps to enhance their faculties. Standards for recruitment and selection should be rigorous and attend to the issue of race and gender diversity. All of the faculty should be held to the highest expectations of instructional excellence. All should be sharing their ideas and exposing them to the criticism of peers in the university and the field. All should be active in local, state, and national programs in educational administration. All should be sensitive to multicultural and gender issues in education.

We expect that graduate professors under this new configuration will keep current with new knowledge and research in their fields. Standards for research excellence should consider the significance of the faculty member's research as it relates to practice, policy, and theory in educational administration.

Second, we recommend that departments have a critical mass of educational administration faculty and maintain a reasonable student-faculty ratio. At least five full-time faculty members are needed simply to represent the areas of specialization in the field.

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Part-time faculty may be needed to supplement course offerings and to cover topics that require a deeper, contemporary experiential base of knowledge. We expect, however, that the core of full-time faculty will provide the bulk of teaching, personal and academic advising, and mentoring in the educational administration program.

Third, we propose that departments maintain a student-faculty ratio comparable to those in other graduate professional degree programs on campus. This is necessary to provide opportunities for collaborative research, development, and instructional activities for campus-based students; to ensure adequate supervision of field-based students; and to permit close supervision of the several projects or final project required by the Ed.D. program. High student-faculty ratios do not permit faculty to spend sufficient time acting as mentors to students, nor is it possible to maintain standards of program quality if individual professors are responsible for supervising the several projects or final project of more than four or five students a year.

Finally, we recognize that maintaining quality means ensuring the continued vitality of the faculty. Each department of educational administration should be held to high standards of human resource development. Evidence of a strong program of personnel development that builds on the strengths and weaknesses of its current faculty should be required for accreditation. Faculty research vitality depends on the development of clear standards of productivity, reasonable teaching loads, creative use of sabbaticals, and the promotion of a collaborative departmental research center that includes students as well as faculty. In addition, departmental vitality in the practice of educational administration can be supported by encouraging faculty to spend sustained time periodically in a school or district engaged in meaningful collaboration with full-time administrators.

We realize these recommendations place demands upon faculty. We are asking them to do research and publish, work in schools, be excellent teachers, have administrative experience, and serve in local, state, and national organizations. These expectations are high, but the future leaders of our schools deserve faculty members who can collectively and individually meet these standards. Colleges and universities that are unwilling to allocate resources to meet such standards do not belong in the business of training educational administrators.

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Programs

4. **The National Policy Board recommends that the doctorate in educational administration (Ed.D.) be a prerequisite to national certification and state licensure for full-time administrators who are in charge of a school or school system[4], and**
   - **Sixth year or specialist degree programs in educational administration be abolished for this level of position,**
   - **Programs in educational administration terminating in a master's degree be abolished altogether.**

The current approaches to licensure among the various states guarantee neither mobility nor quality. Some states require no degree for administrative licensure; others require an M.Ed. or a sixth-year specialist degree beyond the master's. Some states require different licensure paths for different administrative positions.

We believe that the standards for the licensure process have been set too low. Licensure should be based on a degree program, not a collection of courses. Colleges and universities should be held responsible for the work they offer in administrative preparation in education; licensure should be tied directly to program approval by the state.

As noted earlier, the major reports on reforming the teaching profession have recommended that the master's degree become the standard degree for a professional teacher. We agree. Specifically, we propose: abolishing master's degree programs in educational administration; establishing the Ed.D. as the single standard for entry into a full-time administrative position in which the administrator is responsible for a school or school system; and retaining the sixth year or specialist degree program as an intermediate preparation level that may be appropriate for part-time administrative assignments or for administrators who will not be in charge of a school or school system.

Like the M.D. in medicine, the M.B.A. in business, and the J.D. in law, the Ed.D. is a professional degree geared to those who will practice. Unlike the Ph.D. in educational administration, which should emphasize research and social science theory, the Ed.D. centers on preparing individuals to confront and adapt to situations encountered in the complex and ever-changing daily life of a school district. Thus, preparation programs for administrators must be built not only upon theoretical bases, but also on experiential understandings of pedagogy and administrative practice.

Toward this end, we propose basing certification upon a degree which emphasizes elements and experiences that enhance administrative performance. Clinical studies, supervised practice, and practical application of theory are central to the program we propose.

[4]Although a chief school business administrator may be prepared in a doctoral program in educational administration, alternative routes to this specialization are appropriate including, for example, an M.B.A., a sub-doctoral program in education, or a joint education-business program.

This is not to suggest that the Ed.D. should be the final educational experience for school administrators. We see it instead as a beginning, to be followed by lifelong learning through professional development training programs.

5. The National Policy Board recommends that one full-time year of academic residency and one full-time year of field residency be included in the Ed.D. preparation program. Modifications in the type or duration of the clinical residency are permitted for candidates with full-time administrative experience in education. Additional appropriate program requirements are to be determined by the faculty of the graduate school or graduate division in education at each institution.

The work of the individual school administrator affects the future of the whole society, the careers of hundreds of staff, the lives of thousands of children, and the expenditure of millions of dollars. Each day the typical school administrator makes countless key decisions — about instruction, budget, personnel, and children and youth. Preparation programs must introduce prospective administrators to the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and ethics that will enable them to know what to do, how and when to do it, and why and whether to do it.

The only way to accomplish this is through an intense period of uninterrupted and concentrated work. This proposed change would simply elevate school administrative preparation to the level of other professions crucial to our society. Those professions are nearly unanimous in their recognition of the need for an intensive period of study. The burden of proof lies with those who would claim educational administrators need a less rigorous and intense period of preparation than others.

Of the total program of study, we recommend at least one full-time year of university study, during which the student holds no full-time job. Building upon the student's knowledge of pedagogy and the general history and philosophy of education, this year of study, as we envision it, is used to deepen understanding of schooling and school organization. Students become conversant with research on schools and formal organizations. They have their own understandings challenged through critical studies, and they master inquiry and analytic skills. They acquire a set of theoretical and conceptual frameworks and begin simulated practice through case analysis and clinical discussion. At this stage they also begin to work with faculty and other students as professional colleagues, directing their new knowledge and skills to hypothetical problems of practice in controlled but realistic settings.

A second full-time year of field residency is essential for those students who lack significant administrative experience before entering the program. The field re-

sidency for these students is carefully framed. Students examine and record their analyses and actions, using a case record, journal-writing, or other appropriate method. They return to the university weekly for a residency seminar, conducted jointly by academic and clinical professors. During the seminar, they report on their work, their analyses, their interpretations, and subject them to the critiques of the seminar and comments by senior practitioners and professors. Their performance during the field residency and seminar is carefully monitored and studied by the clinical and academic faculty; records of performance become part of the students' doctoral files.

Some students, especially during the early years of this reform, will enter Ed.D. programs with substantial administrative experience. Obviously, this should be taken into account in designing a field residency. The student may need diversity of experience in terms of role or setting. Perhaps the opportunity for the residency could be used to conduct a field study or program improvement effort in a school district. Field residencies for such students should be designed individually and might involve a summer period, a portion of an academic year, or several periodic field-based assignments.

In all instances, we assume the full doctoral program will demand additional coursework, research projects, and individual requirements determined by the graduate division of the university offering the degree.

These recommendations will create new demands for financial support and will require significant financial sacrifices from some students. We do not, however, accept these as reasons to continue the status quo of part-time study. The trade-off in learning has been too great. Time-on-task is as relevant to adult learning as to youth learning. Our bottom line is this: students who want a professional doctorate must attend a higher education institution for a reasonable period.

6. **The National Policy Board recommends that the elements of the curriculum be developed to transmit a common core of knowledge and skills, grounded in the problems of practice, including**
   - **Societal and cultural influences on schooling,**
   - **Teaching and learning processes and school improvement,**
   - **Organizational theory,**
   - **Methodologies of organizational studies and policy analysis,**
   - **Leadership and management processes and functions,**
   - **Policy studies and politics of education,**
   - **Moral and ethical dimensions of schooling.**

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An excellent administrator affects the quality of teaching and learning in the district or school, exercises leadership and nurtures leadership responsibilities among others, and creates a positive school experience for all students, teachers, and parents. Current graduate programs are criticized for failing to provide the minimal learnings needed by educational administrators to foster excellence in schooling. We recommend that every program include, as its common core, seven foundational areas of learning.

First, the core must examine the societal and cultural factors that influence education, so that administrators emerge with an understanding of the environment in which they will function. Preparation programs must discuss demographic changes relating to race, sex, family composition, and family income; they must address the impact of home and family on teaching and learning. Programs must teach administrators how to deal effectively with students from diverse backgrounds and how to use multicultural situations to enrich the educational experience. Prospective administrators must become familiar with the resources available through other social service and community agencies and understand how such agencies relate to schools. In addition, administrators must learn how to assess the potential impact of administrative decisions upon children, families, teachers, and the community.

Second, preparation programs must never lose sight of the core function of the school: teaching and learning. Prospective administrators must gain a thorough understanding of the instructional and learning processes at the school building level. All programs should instill in their graduate students a broad knowledge of the research base in teaching and learning, an understanding of factors affecting school change and school improvement, and the ability to translate this knowledge into a vision of instructional excellence behind which the school system or school can rally.

Third, educational administrators should know the rich theoretical and empirical literature that explains the structure and dynamics of organizational life in schools and the role of the individual in organizations. Clearly the ambiguities of organizations cannot be eliminated, but they can be made more understandable and less threatening by providing administrators with basic concepts and analyses of organizational life. This body of knowledge is a powerful tool for observing, interpreting, changing and guiding educational practice. Such knowledge is rooted in a comprehensive study of organizational theory from traditional perspectives and from such contemporary alternative views as critical and feminist theory.

Fourth, research and evaluation skills should focus on tools that will assist the administrator in studying schools as organizations and becoming a reflective practitioner. Inquiry techniques from sociology and social psychology seem especially relevant to these ends. Evaluation methodology should emphasize the assessment of program and organizational outcomes. All students should be introduced to techniques of policy analysis. Every student should be functionally literate in basic qualitative and quan-

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titative design. Improvement in personal practice demands that the practitioner be able to examine formally and informally what is occurring in her/his environment.

Fifth, preparation programs must transmit knowledge of basic leadership and management processes and functions. Students must master such functional skills as resource allocation, scheduling, planning, and computer applications; and such process skills as working with groups, managing conflict, and building coalitions. Administrators need to do as well as to know. One might expect these topics to be well-represented in the curriculum, but they are not. A wide gap exists between what is taught and what practitioners say they need. Consequently, these courses should be developed in close consultation with colleagues in the field.

Sixth, preparation programs should include content about policy studies and the politics of education. Prospective administrators need to be introduced to the legislative process, how decisions are negotiated locally, within state policy guidelines, and in relation to national educational emphases. They need to understand the influence of community power structures; the local electoral process; how boards of education function; how the school interacts with community pressures and needs; who is best and least well served and why; how teachers, schools as units, the district, and the community interact to create a local school organization.

Finally, the program must address what is right to do as well as the right way to do it. Students should be pushed to examine their own belief systems, their reasons for wanting to be administrators, their images of the mission of schooling as a social process. The curriculum should be designed to provide frameworks and tools to assist students in assessing the moral and ethical implications of administrative decisions in schools. They must come to understand the concept of public trust and to realize how values affect behaviors and outcomes.

This curriculum should be practice-based and practice-driven – both directly and through the application of theoretical frameworks to school operations and functions. Rather than segregating theory and practice, the curriculum should integrate them. Instruction must be dynamic and of uniformly high quality; faculty must recognize the instructional needs of adults and show sensitivity to the racial and gender diversity of students. The curriculum should transmit the common core in a logical, sequential progression.

We propose that the profession reach a consensus on the elements of this knowledge base and codify it into a core program that can be modified as the knowledge base evolves.

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7. The National Policy Board recommends that long term formal relationships be established between universities and school districts to create partnership sites for clinical study, field residency, and applied research.

The quality of the preparation program for school administrators relies on the establishment and maintenance of long-term, formal, collegial relationships between university departments of educational administration and school systems that exhibit excellence in administrative performance and educational outcomes.

The student's year of field residency depends as heavily on the field-based mentors as the year of university study depends upon the university faculty. Daily observation, participation, and reflection during the residency year require a relationship between the trainees and their mentors that is intense, intellectually stimulating, and trusting. The field residency period will revolve around supervised practice, assessment of the trainee's strengths and weaknesses, and site-based academic seminars. Developing high quality residency programs and experiences requires planning, commitment, energy, and sensible logistical arrangements. University-school district partnerships must be selected with these demands in mind.

A relatively large university preparation program would involve multiple sites with teams of practicing administrators at each site. In addition to providing sites for field residency, the school system partners would contribute to the entire preparation program. Ideally, the field administrators would hold adjunct faculty status, participate in program planning and design, teach sessions of courses from time to time, and conduct field-based seminars to discuss trainee experiences. The field administrators would be an integral part of the candidate's experience, beginning with candidate selection, on through the instructional program, and ending with placement in a professional position.

Obviously, this vision of a unified responsibility for the preparation of school leaders would intrude on the current work life of practicing administrators. Such an intrusion needs to be justified and accounted for institutionally as well as individually. These arrangements cannot simply be add-ons to the busy life of the administrator. The partnership school district has to be assured that the agreement will contribute to the effectiveness of education in the district, that its participating administrators will have opportunities for personal and professional growth at the university, that university personnel and students will take an active interest in problem-solving activities in the local school district, and that upon completion of their program, trainees will be a source of future leadership talent for the district. Arrangements to exchange professorial and administrative assignments or doctoral student responsibilities should be a regular feature of the program. The university should use its national and regional contacts to support staff development needs in the partnership districts. Joint fiscal

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responsibility for training activities should be determined in advance.

The preparation of effective school leaders requires the physical sites, expert personnel, and diverse experiences of both the university and the school. Planned, regularized, collegial arrangements can make this requirement a reality. Students can literally draw upon the best current research, theory, literature, and practice in their university and school district sites. And, ultimately, each site will enrich the other.

Assessment

8. The National Policy Board recommends that a national professional standards board consisting primarily of practicing school administrators be established to develop and administer a national certification examination and that states be encouraged to require candidates for licensure to pass this examination.

The national standards board, as we propose it, would develop and administer a national certification examination to assess the quality of persons entering the field of educational administration. Obtaining a national certificate of educational administration upon completion of an accredited preparation program will attest to the candidate's competency as an administrator. This assessment activity should appraise the individual's command of the common core of knowledge, skills, and abilities described earlier in this report.

We encourage states to revise their licensure standards to require candidates for licensure or endorsement to pass the national examination as one criterion of competency.

Ultimately, the national professional standards board should consider establishing advanced examinations for experienced, successful educational administrators to recognize signal performance in educational leadership.

9. The National Policy Board recommends that national accreditation of administrator preparation programs be withheld unless the programs meet the standards specified in this report and that criteria for state accreditation and program approval include these standards.

In this report we have called for fundamental changes in administrator preparation. Institutions of higher education may need outside assistance in making these changes. Advice and periodic appraisal from an informed third party can help keep administrator preparation reform on course and can provide individual institutions with

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feedback on their progress. Toward this end, we recommend national accreditation for all administrator preparation programs, to be based upon the standards specified in this report. We further recommend that states incorporate these same standards in their accreditation and program approval processes.

Accreditation can be undertaken by an existing agency, such as the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, or a newly-organized body. In any case, the national accrediting agency would be responsible for systematically appraising educational administration preparation programs. These reviews would occur on a cyclical basis, every three to five years. The review would assess such dimensions as:

Faculty quality. The accrediting agency would examine the degree to which an institution had a critical mass of experienced faculty with the subject matter expertise and practical experience necessary for a high-calibre program. The review should take into consideration the recommendations contained in the earlier sections of this report concerning faculty quality and diversity.

Program quality. The review would scrutinize such program dimensions as field or clinical internships, full-time study requirements, and specific curricular content.

Student quality. The accrediting agency would examine the number of applications, admissions, and acceptances; the number of graduates; the extent of race, ethnic, and gender diversity; the employment of graduates; and the average scores of applicants, admittees, and graduates on the standardized tests proposed in this report.

We also recommend that each institution be required to undertake an annual self appraisal and issue its findings in a "report card" containing such information as that described above. The national accreditation review would assess the accuracy and completeness of each institution's report card.

An institution failing to meet national accreditation standards would be placed on probation. After a reasonable period of time on probation, an institution that failed to meet requirements would have its accreditation suspended or cancelled.

In addition to its program review functions, the national accrediting agency would be available to provide advice and facilitate the flow of information to participating institutions. Advice could cover admissions procedures, instructional techniques and materials, curriculum development, and faculty recruitment. Also, the national accrediting agency would compile, synthesize, and distribute the self-appraisal report cards prepared by each participating institution.

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Conclusion

Taken together, these nine items represent a new way of viewing the profession of educational administration. We believe the educational administrator deserves a preservice preparation that is equal to that of any other valuable professional in our society.

While we encourage flexibility within the spirit of these recommendations, we strongly discourage an approach that picks and chooses elements that are easily implemented within a given set of political and economic constraints. The program we envision is cohesive and logically structured and cannot be picked apart without losing its integrity.

We understand that our proposal will necessitate changes in current administrator preparation programs that will not always be easy and that may result in the elimination of some programs that do not meet the standards. As we see it, the nation's first duty is to its students, who deserve well-trained administrators. In the next section we discuss some implementation issues that institutions and agencies involved in administrator preparation should begin considering.

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Finding A Way To Implement Reform

Moving to an effective professional model for the preparation of educational administrators will require the best efforts of university professors and administrators, state educational leaders, practicing administrators, and local school boards. It will require vision, time, and resources. The agenda in this document speaks for the commitment of the organized profession in educational administration to press ahead with reform.

We are intentionally not offering specific strategies for implementation in this document because we believe that the entire profession must embark upon that mission together. To sustain a dialogue, the profession needs to establish cooperative working groups at state and regional levels.

We have, however, identified a series of questions that are bound to arise. These include the following:

- **Can educational administration compete with other graduate training fields for the best talent?**
- **Can we balance stiffer standards against concerns for access and equity and projected shortages of administrators in some states?**
- **Will universities invest in a graduate training program which heretofore has been a source of university income?**
- **Can students with five to ten years of experience afford to return to full-time university study followed by a year of full-time residency?**
- **Will universities and local school districts be able to develop and operate mutually advantageous centers for administrator preparation?**
- **Will state licensure and program approval agencies be able to enforce higher standards for administrator preparation, given the pressure from colleges and universities to offer coursework and from individual aspirants to obtain an administrative license?**
- **Can the profession create and sustain programs of selective certification and accreditation on a national level?**

The answer to all these questions is yes — but not easily, not alone, and not without tradeoffs. Institutions will have to give up some prerogatives they now have; individuals will have to sacrifice some conveniences and privileges they now possess. Policy

makers and administrators will be criticized and pressured to reconsider. The effort is worth the travail for one reason: America's schools need enlightened leaders.

Here are the core issues of implementation that we believe require immediate attention:

1. Full-time residential study and practice require sources of student support not currently available. All participants in the process (universities, local districts, state legislatures and state agencies) must invest in and invent packages of support for trainees.
2. High-quality graduate programs do not generate revenue for colleges and universities; they cost money. The current level of investment in graduate preparation for educational administrators cannot support quality graduate programs.
3. Joint involvement of universities and local school districts in administrator preparation will have to be based upon mutual advantage. Neither partner has substantial experience in developing or operating such partnerships.
4. Recruiting top candidates to educational administration involves head-to-head competition with other administrative fields and other professions. Educational administration suffers in the competition because the economic return for its graduates is lower than that of some other professional careers. The competition is unusually difficult and important when the target is minority candidates.
5. Upgrading standards of admission and performance cannot be accomplished by administrative fiat. Faculty development programs and acculturation for both students and faculty are needed.
6. Many colleges and universities that currently offer degree programs or coursework to meet state certification requirements will be confronted with the issues of expanding and upgrading faculty resources, increasing expenditures, recruiting top students, working with partnership districts or withdrawing from graduate study in this field. These institutions will include some current high volume producers of graduates and certificate holders.

7. **An extended period of research and experimentation to establish valid and reliable instruments will have to precede the enforcement of national certification and accreditation standards.**

8. **Creative relationships need to be invented so that the state-level responsibility for licensure and program approval is complemented by the national professional commitment to certification and accreditation.**

The profession has entered a period that is at once exciting and frustrating. The National Policy Board for Educational Administration calls upon every individual in the profession of educational administration to join with it to produce the leaders that students, teachers, and American communities deserve. If the cause is compelling, we can find a way.

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About the National Policy Board for Educational Administration

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration is representative of practitioners, faculty members, and policy makers in the field of educational administration who are committed to reform in their profession. The Board was officially formed on January 20, 1988.

The National Policy Board consists of representatives from the following ten member organizations:

- American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- American Association of School Administrators
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- Association of School Business Officials
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Council of Professors of Educational Administration
- National School Boards Association
- University Council for Educational Administration

The Board's charter outlines three purposes:

(1) To develop, disseminate, and implement professional models for the preparation of educational leaders;

(2) To increase the recruitment and placement of women and minorities in positions of educational leadership; and

(3) To establish a national certifying board for educational administrators.

Acknowledgments

In preparing to develop this agenda, the Board appointed a six member study group to draft recommendations and supporting text and to discuss these recommendations with the Board. This document owes a special place of recognition to this group:

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Thirdly, and very importantly, the Board wishes to recognize the several reform reports that dealt directly with educational administration in the past three years — reports that served as source documents and as an inspiration to this effort:

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, ***School Leadership Preparation: A Preface for Action*** **(1988)**

American Association of School Administrators, ***Skills for Successful School Leaders*** **(1985)**

National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration, ***Leaders for America's Schools*** **(1988)**

National Association of Elementary School Principals, ***Principals for 21st Century Schools*** **(1989)**

National Association of Secondary School Principals, ***Organizing for Learning: Toward the 21st Century*** **(1989)**

National Governor's Association, ***Time for Results*** **(1986)**

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